The COMMONWEAL

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THE INNER FORUM 598

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Unrest in the Conquered Countries

BOUND to the rock, Andromeda awaited Perseus for deliverance. Her pure unchangeable form, more beautiful than those of the sea nymphs, isolated in terror, awaited death or liberation. We would be happier if we could think of France thus captive and immutable, of Poland thus terrorized and expectant and unmutilated, of Greece thus Parian—of all the conquered countries as if in suspended animation, set apart, withdrawn from the struggle, awaiting their fate in the outcome of the war. But the living communities which are nations have not the immobile perfection, the enduring identity of legend; in suffering they change: no Perseus can ever free them to be what they were.

In the conquered countries runs now a fever of unrest. Deportations, oppression, uncertainty and starvation are reflected in anger and despair, in fatigue and in hope, in submission and in revolt. The German police catalogue, reward, and execute. A workman in St. Denis, a shepherd of the Montenegrin hills, a general in Prague die to proclaim diversity, to inaugurate chaos against which no rigid centralized rule—neither communist nor nazi nor fascist—can interminably prevail. But the people of the conquered and the conquering nations of continental Europe are bound together. Prisoners and wardens live in the same jail of violence and misery. More and more news of discontent comes from an Italy which faces a desperate outlook for the future and endures a present which can hardly be differentiated from that of a conquered country. Once again, as in every past Italian crisis, there is the ominous shift to the left of fascist internal policy. And there is news—not so well documented—of unrest in Germany itself. Victory and cruelty are not easier to bear than defeat and despair. Quite apart from the course of military events and regardless of the heavy menace which looms for Germany across the Atlantic, neither the German people, nor the German army which is not alien to the German people, will tolerate indefinitely their isolation from the normal human pursuit of happiness.

Naturally we are inclined to evaluate the growing disorder in Europe as an immediate factor influencing the outcome of the war. As such it is important and possibly may prove to be decisive. But with the war concluded, what then? The war will be won—perhaps without invasion of German territory or even of the Continent—the day the nazi ideology is discredited in Germany and its active implementation brought to a halt. The collapse of nazi domination will free the German people, and the imprisoned Italian people, as it will free the immeasurably more unfortunate peoples that the German and the Italian states have reduced to misery. The day of liberation, save for the murdered, will come for all—but these new free men, weakened, divided in allegiance, and resentful, will walk forth amid the ruins of all they knew before the war. Changed, too, in their hearts, they will enter a world bound by the compulsions of indescribable hatred. For the "unrest" that will bring the war to an end will also have prepared that world.

The Persecution of the Church

BISHOP VON GALEN of Muenster said at the end of July, in the teeth of the nazi S.S.: "We Christians are the anvil, the others are the hammer, and the anvil never yet gave out first." Reports come that Bishop Von Galen is directly challenging the nazi police with flat protest, naming names, delivering sermons and finding effective publicity. He is reported to have refused a vacation "for his health" and to be under house arrest. . . . The worst accounts that come right now are from Slovenia. Out of 1,500,000 people, the nazis are said to be deporting 283,000. The professional classes and the priests have been arrested. In Maribok diocese, for instance, 267 out of 274 priests are claimed to have been arrested. Slovenia is a Catholic and "western" region of Jugoslavia. . . . The pastoral of four bishops of Holland, issued August 3, has just been published in the US. Under the blows, the Dutch Catholics stand firm and the Bishops refuse to permit their people to enter the ranks of the nazis or of their "innocent fronts" and still remain in the Church. . . . In the

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Russian contest, both Hitler and Stalin are reported to exploit divided Orthodox church organizations, flayed by twenty years of terror. . . . In Poland persecution has been the worst, as all testimony has proved. A further report on conditions there comes in the September *Blackfriars*:

> Later reports make doubtful the continued actual internment or imprisonment of Monsignor Szepticky [Andrew Szepticky, Archbishop of Lwow for the Byzantine rite and Primate of the Ukrainian Catholics] by the Bolshevists. In any case he will surely have been set free by the German invaders, for it appears that in Western Poland nazi policy has been not to persecute the Catholic Ukrainians, but to encourage and back them up against their fellow citizens, the Poles (which for historical reasons it is only too easy to do). It is this sort of thing, and the willingness of so many Christians to lend themselves to such political maneuvers, that has for centuries helped still further to bedevil the religious unity of Christians.

The recent journey of Myron C. Taylor to the Vatican has produced astonishing rumors in the press. Among other and much more unlikely things, the papers insist that Pope Pius XII gave him a special message pleading that the British refrain from bombing Rome—though how they claim to know this is beyond the ken of ordinary journalism. But soon after Taylor had been in London, Churchill announced that "we shouldn't hesitate to bomb Rome to the best of our ability and as heavily as possible if the course of the war should render such action convenient and helpful."

On October 1, the papers carried the most remarkable single press interview with President Roosevelt that has yet been printed:

> President Roosevelt . . . took occasion today to point out that the Soviet constitution provides for freedom of religious worship and freedom of conscience in essentially the same manner as is provided in the United States.

The newspaper handling of Taylor's trip, the Churchill speech, and the reports of the President's interview mystify and disturb us. Is there any connection between them and what would such connection be? But, first, what did the President mean? We will not even attempt to interpret the interview or speculate upon its purposes at this time. Now, it is all one can do to declare that the episode is incomplete, that the interview as reported in the New York press is a first chapter or a mockery.

Food for the War Victims

SENATOR THOMAS of Oklahoma and 36 other Senators have a resolution pending before the Foreign Relations Committee which urges Secretary Hull to attempt the formulation of a plan to collaborate with other governments in feeding the European countries now occupied by the Germans and Italians. Despite considerable congressional agitation in its favor the New York *Times* reports that it will not be seriously considered: "The resolution will be brought up for a vote in committee as soon as the administration leadership is certain of enough votes to kill it." As a move in this direction Senator Connally released a June 19 letter of Secretary Hull to Senator George of the committee to the effect that the responsibility for these harassed populations is Germany's and for other reasons not disclosed that ended it. In the face of mounting reports of threatened starvation, and the imminence of winter, the administration remains obdurate on the question, refuses even to permit a small-scale experiment to see whether the lives of thousands of victims can be saved without materially furthering a German victory. In the verdict of history the United States will have to share the responsibility for permitting the starvation of Europe's conquered peoples.

Agitation on behalf of these war victims appears to be subsiding in this country, but there is indication that the continuation of this non-aid policy is being questioned in England. The latest issue of the London *Catholic Herald* to reach here, dated September 5, features a front page story on the question. The article is introduced with the remark that this is "a matter very much the business of anyone who is determined to see that the war is fought in a way not incompatible with Christian behavior." To get the case for feeding the conquered peoples the correspondent who wrote the story went to American quarters, whose sympathies can be judged from the fact "that the Germans were often referred to as the 'Huns.'" The Hoover plan was to set up supervised food kitchens for school children, expectant mothers and the destitute to supplement the meager fare of the general population with fats, meats and other provisions not available in the conquered territories. The Germans were to furnish the breadstuffs and potatoes as they have been doing in Belgium lately. Such a plan worked well for a considerable time under the American Commission for Polish Relief, with the Germans living up to the promises they had made. This project would be less extensive than the work of the Hoover commission in the last war, which fed 10,000,000 people in Belgium and Northern France and stiffened their resistance. Belgians had to be deported to Germany to get them to do any work for the Germans. Today the nazis hold out this sort of collaboration as the only means of keeping one's family from starvation. And apathy rather than increased resistance has proved to be the result of starvation. Seizure of the small amounts of food available under the Hoover plan would not prolong the war a single day; it would settle once and for all the doubts of Britain and the United States as to their responsibility for the lives of those whom they are blockading. The headline of this *Catholic Herald* article reads: "Are We Making a Tragic Mistake?"

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More Advice for the Farmer

POSSIBLY because it is so long since the American farmer has been well off and urbanites are afraid he won't know how to use his money, he has of late become the target for a plethora of advice. Observers have not forgotten the dislocation caused by agricultural expansion in the last war, a disturbance that was accentuated in the 20's by the substitution of tractors for horses and mules, which suddenly cut the acreages needed for producing feed. Farm surpluses have grown steadily, and even with the extra war demand, there is today a two-year supply of wheat on hand. Until very recently cotton was the most acute surplus problem. It is doubtful whether the influence of stringent farm conditions in bringing about the nationwide depression has received the weight that is its due. Not only the cost of farm products to the consumer and the purchasing power for urban products vested in the farmer, but investments in farm mortgages with their large place in the folios of the country's largest insurance companies must be taken into account. Hence the importance of the recent Washington meeting of the nation's leading farm mortgage lenders. The program outlined there by governor A. G. Black of the Farm Credit Administration embodies a lot of good sense. It calls for limiting appraisals on farm properties by taking normal crop values instead of current war values; encouragement to pay off as much of their mortgages as possible now that farmers have the money; discouraging speculative expansion of fixed farm plant and speculative expansion of production; the use of credit to achieve a better balanced agriculture with emphasis on the family farm to insure a more secure standard of living. It is hard for borrowers and lenders to pass up what looks like an opportunity for big immediate profits, but the past ten years indicate what happens when agricultural speculation is widespread.

Caesar or Augustus

THE PRESS and the public have shown in general little interest in the vast economic problems presented by the war, specifically in the immediate and indefinitely prolonged expenditures of resources, plant and money. The unbalanced budget has not been news. But the House Banking and Currency Committee hearings have lately been picking up public interest. The most startling testimony has been Secretary Morgenthau's, advocating a corporate profit limit at 6 percent. The most enlightening and stimulating so far has seemed to us to be that of Marriner S. Eccles, chairman of the Federal Reserve governors.

> . . . Our vast defense expenditures are putting buying power into the hands of the public at a faster rate than goods can be turned out to satisfy both the increasing civilian demand as well as our expanding defense requirements. . . .
>
> The first line of attack upon the problem is to increase production to the greatest possible extent. . . .
>
> For the present, however, the most important aim of public policy on the economic front, next to procuring maximum production, is to dampen civilian demand for goods which cannot be produced in sufficient quantities. . . .

The means of manipulating the economy toward these ends, Chairman Eccles divides into two classes: "functional," over-all actions, and "direct controls." The former are preferred as more democratic, more stimulating, natural and free. "Functional" means would probably include: corporate and individual income taxes; excise taxes; tariffs and taxes in general; social security charges; fiscal and monetary measures such as types of borrowing and money regulation; labor policy dealing over-all with strikes, wages and hours (*not* the fixing of particular wages and hours); etc. The direct controls would presumably include price fixing by product; priorities, or more extreme rationing; regulation of consumers' credit; wage fixing; labor placement, etc.

> The point that I desire to emphasize, however, is that the economic area to which we must apply direct controls depends in large part upon how promptly and effectively we use the functional measures to draw off buying power —and at the same time help pay for defense.

Mr. Eccles feels that speed and effectiveness are necessary in setting up the functional controls in order to accomplish the fundamental economic purpose, and also to prevent the necessity to impose the direct controls, which, it is agreed, are "fascist." Unless Congress acts quickly, the US may be forced to "resort to the very system we would like to see defeated. . . . I sometimes fear that that may be possible because it seems that the democratic processes don't work too efficiently."

The *economic* effect of the sum total of functional controls would be similar to that of the direct controls. It might anyway be said more generally that the "functional" is the Augustan method and the "direct" the Caesarean. But there is a difference worth struggling and cooperating for which the public should recognize. There is a desperate danger that the general, over-all methods will get so complicated and burdensome in administration that the impulsion to cut the problem out by an easy resort to direct methods will be overwhelming. It is good to have a man in Mr. Eccles's position face the problem so squarely. If businessmen, union leaders, public leaders, government administrators do as well, and if the public works together, America might get through without that "new order" implicit in the "direct controls" and will not have to trust with resourceless optimism that our war economy will spontaneously change its spots when the war is over.

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Brooklyn Co-op Warehouse

Seeing to it that 25,000 Easterners get their groceries the cooperative way.

***By* Edward Skillin, Jr.**

IT WAS the day the Brooklyn Dodgers were to clinch the pennant for the first time in over 20 years. Not being an inhabitant it didn't concern me much directly. The St. Louis Cards might well have made it more interesting for the Ruthless Yankees in the coming world series, but who can say? If the western Gas House Gang had made the grade, it would have meant a triumph for the most efficient chain store system in baseball. Under present ownership the Dodgers seem in contrast more like a single supermarket, although one of its farm teams, the Montreal Royals, has just won its way into a world series of its own. Business, not real sport. Every time between puffs for Wheaties or Lifebuoy soap a radio announcer describes Dolf Camilli, Mickey Owen or Ducky Wucky (Muscles) Medwick, for instance, striding up to the plate, I can't help thinking of $60,000, $50,000 and $132,500, the respective price tags listed in a recent *Saturday Evening Post*. With $888,100 laid down for 47 different ball players in the last three years, the Brooklyn management have found 10 or 12 hired hands who could do all right. The pennant race had been a struggle right down to the wire and the result a genuine satisfaction to millions of Flatbush residents. News writers had for days been looking forward to describing their frenzied celebrations.

Brooklyn fans do pose another question. The way they supported their team through seasons of disappointment, their pride in Dazzy Vance, Zack Wheat, Babe Herman and other heroes in a lost cause has always appealed to me. So, too, when they got in the thick of the pennant race, the way the local rooters followed the team to nearby cities. But recently disturbing reports have been filtering through of Brooklyn fans who had self-consciously taken to grotesque costumes and kicking up a fuss as a regular profession. And both fans and players have been so intent on winning that they have kicked far too often against anti-Dodger decisions to live up to the traditions of the sport. Oh for the good old days when Dodger teams hit upon the most ingenious ways of losing ball games, when their base-running was a mix-up to remember. For all their fight the present National League champions as a team do not kindle my imagination, but I was curious to see some genuine Dodger fans.

A nickel ride and walk

Union Square with its historic associations and its milling bargain hunters of today is a good taking off place. The Canarsie line of the BMT was practically deserted early that weekday morning; all the traffic seemed to be Manhattanward—away from the city of homes. There were brief pauses at 3rd and 1st Avenues and then the train whizzed under the East River with a familiar tunnel roar. All was quiet when we pulled into the white-tiled Bedford Avenue station, just five minutes from Union Square. One of my traveling companions, a gent with a two days' growth of whitening beard, politely held the exit door so it would not swing in my face. This was Brooklyn. Out on the street a vast calm seemed to envelop everything. Very few people were about, there were no groups gesticulating excitedly, I failed even to overhear the expected query, "I wonder if they'll win it today?" The quiet, the calm, the observably slow tempo were not what I'd expected. And what a contrast to the square across the river.

The man in the corner cigar store directed me toward my destination. North 7th Street extended invitingly in the morning sun. I walked by the irregular skyline of two, three and four-storey flats. Most of the buildings were brick of varying shades; occasionally there was a house of unpainted clapboard. A number of the dwellings had fire escapes on the street façades. To add to the informality some were set well back from the street and then you could see narrow lawns and gardens. The streets were practically empty and only a few people hung out of windows or draped themselves over entrance steps. There was hardly a baby carriage. A sleek black cat sunned himself on the top of a high unpainted wooden wall, looking down, no doubt, on more grass and flowers.

Except for the cross streets which had the usual street car tracks, food stores, 5 and 10's, cut-rate pharmacies and other little shops, there were few commercial establishments to be seen. On North 7th the Tullio Oil Company did look quite modernistic and business-like. Otherwise such establishments as Eve's Beauty Shop, North Side Plating and Polishing, Public School 38, John Serko—Undertaker, and West Haven Beer and Ales fitted unobtrusively into the neighborhood. Could Dodger rooters come from such tranquillity?

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There was greater bustle when I neared Kent Avenue and looked across the East River where uptown skyscrapers towered above the gas works on the water's edge. There were railroad tracks, freight cars, many passing trucks. Down beyond the compact Eastern Cooperative Wholesale, Inc. building lay the huge yellow warehouse of the Austin Nichols grocers. Directly across from my destination stands the Brooklyn Eastern District Terminal and back of that a Pennsylvania Railroad dock and freight terminal. I had reached the fringe of the city of homes.

How it started

Finnish influence was uppermost in the formation of a sort of cooperative brokerage to serve ten nearby member societies in 1929. The base broadened in 1936 when this group went into warehousing, which for consumers' cooperatives means supervision of quality. Two years later a modern two-storey brick warehouse with four times the floor space at 135 Kent Avenue was rented to take care of the tremendous business growth. This building has its own railroad siding, lies near the East River docks and has facilities for loading and sheltering several large trucks and trailers. The present lease runs to October, 1942.

When an order reaches the Eastern Co-op Wholesale it goes first to the bookkeeping department to check on the member store's credit. (In accordance with the Rochdale cash principle, all shipments must be paid for within seven days.) If the credit is OK and details of the order clear, it next goes to a long, narrow room of rows of open files. Standard order forms have been drawn up in accordance with the warehouse floor plan. Each card in the open file represents a case of a certain product. Cards are then pulled in order and inserted in one of those infernal International Business machines which automatically produces a shipshape order sheet containing price, quantity, total and all essential information.

This sheet then makes its way to the storage floors proper, where men in light-brown jumpers are busily taking cartons to and fro. Their first names in red are sewn on the front, "CO-OP" in large red letters on the back of their uniforms. Income and outgo are mostly by truck. The fleet comprises six bright-red 12½ ton trailers boldly marked "CO-OP—consumer owned," four tractors to draw them and three smaller delivery trucks. From Brooklyn they go as far north as Rochester, as far south as Virginia, as far west as Pittsburgh. New England is serviced from the Boston warehouse. They keep 171 stores in the mid-Atlantic and New England states supplied with quality foods and other tested goods.

Quality is a key factor in the program of the co-ops. Most of the merchandise that goes out from the Brooklyn and Boston warehouses bears the co-op label. If it is a commodity on which there are government specifications, it is labeled A, B or C. In all cases it is graded according to the standards set by National Cooperatives in Chicago. Best grade is red label, next best blue and third grade green. I failed to see any of the green labeled products in the course of my tour of inspection. Besides this the co-ops go much farther. Each label bears "Co-op Food Facts," a wealth of information and description on the labeled product. This informational label has made a great hit with consumers. Something similar is now being rather generally used by A&P and a few other chain store systems. Unlike other kinds of enterprise, co-ops like it when rival businesses adopt their progressive methods. Being socially-minded, cooperators want as many consumers as possible to get their money's worth even if they are not members.

The testing kitchen at 135 Kent Avenue looks much like an enlarged modern home kitchen with gleaming white stoves and fixtures. There a trained staff determines whether the various producers succeed in coming up to National Co-op specifications as to weight, size, consistency, etc. Some dozen people of several nationalities sample every product, for taste is of primary importance. Both the kitchen and the adjacent staff cafeteria have high ceilings and are bright and airy. They serve about 50 lunches a day to members of the staff, whose good health attests the wholesomeness of co-op products.

Store managers get together

The cafeteria also serves once each month as the meeting place for managers of local consumers cooperative retail stores. A similar regional group meets regularly at the Boston warehouse. The room is lined with model shelves built by the official carpenter, about whom more anon. Gay colored posters plastered on the walls bespeak the virtues of Co-op Tires, Co-op Motor Oil, Co-op Shortening, Co-op Peaches, Co-op Insurance. At one side stands a large model self-service store refrigerator for dairy products. Constructed of glass and white enamel, it bears the legend in large letters, "Please Serve Yourself." Two shiny self-service basket-trucks for customer trundling up and down store aisles rested against the far wall next to some pink and white window stickers listing specially good buys, a practice about which co-operators do not agree at present.

On several cafeteria tables at the back of the room were ranged a number of Co-op products. Among these were soft drinks and soda, buckwheat and pancake flour, rolled oats, baking chocolate, canned string beans, pickles and shaving cream. In a far corner stood a rather dusty co-op console radio; a trim co-op refrigerator stood nearby.

As I understand it, managers' meetings are any-

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thing but going through the motions. They are well attended. As in all human institutions there are plenty of occasions for kicks. There are new problems to be thrashed out, new techniques to be demonstrated. With the boom in supermarkets on, for instance, there is the task of introducing many of their popular features into the various retail stores. There is a full-fledged co-op supermarket at Maynard, Massachusetts, now, and many of the stores are transforming their operation in that direction. A labor committee of the wholesale does what it can to make sure that the wholesale purchases from those who produce under decent labor conditions, but as there are 1,200 different sources of supply it has been impossible to check them all as yet. The wholesale counts a good deal on the power of example in maintaining quality and price.

Further activities

The Brooklyn warehouse also shelters a milk cooperative serving eleven member societies. It is the headquarters for Farm Bureau Cooperative auto and life insurance in the east. It has a special store planning and store designing department, for the Swedes discovered early that the attractiveness and efficiency of their store buildings had a great influence in spreading the cooperative idea. John Nylander, who runs a carpenter shop in the warehouse, goes out and installs his shelves in the new stores throughout the eastern territory and apparently makes the most of this opportunity of setting local managers straight on orthodox cooperative procedure. He speaks from many years' experience going back to earlier days in his native Finland.

The Eastern Cooperative League publishes "The Cooperator," a four-page illustrated biweekly newspaper for members. Concerned primarily with developments throughout its eastern territory, it chronicles relevant happenings from all parts of the world. Part of the warehouse is used as a multigraph and mimeograph shop, an activity that also grows apace.

Growth is, in fact, the characteristic of the enterprise that first strikes the passing observer. Each year for the past several years business has increased by 40 percent. Purchases from the wholesale in 1940 amounted to $1,559,895.78, and it should exceed two millions in 1941. On a conservative basis net earnings amounted to $21,110 or 1.35 percent of sales—another indication that it is conducted for the benefit of member societies. At the same time operating expenses have continued to decrease. They amounted to but 6.83 percent of sales in 1940. The answer to the contention that co-ops cannot meet chain store competition is the way the Eastern Cooperative and affiliated wholesales in other parts of the country are doing it. Can any other business in the country boast a 40 percent annual increase year after year?

Many of the individual members participate in consumers cooperation for religious or idealistic rather than for primarily economic reasons. A survey by *Sales Management* magazine last year indicated that the most cogent reasons for the individual member's participation were, in order of popularity: because co-ops tell the whole truth about merchandise; better quality; uniform labeling; co-ops are the beginning of a new and better way of life.

Sports scribes have reiterated that the Dodgers had to win the pennant this year or never. By 1942 some of their older luminaries will begin to creak. The Brooklyn Co-op warehouse is a better bet. Next year it will be way ahead of where it is now. And thousands of consumers will be added to the present 25,000 adherents of one of the soundest forms of economic democracy yet developed.

She Kept Her Distance

By **Jesse Stuart**

"LOMMIE WILBURN is a funny woman," Effie Pratt said. "I've never done a thing to her in my life. She always looked a hole through me every time I saw her. Now she's laying up there dying and she sends for me. Maybe she wants to confess something."

Effie put her shawl around her shoulders and took the lantern from the nail on the back porch. She took a piece of rich pine kindling and caught blaze from the burning forestick. She lit the neat trimmed lantern-wick, walked out into the late March wind. "Johnson, take care of the house and children," she said. "I'll be back as soon as I see what Lommie Wilburn wants with me."

Lommie Wilburn had been a pretty woman, but the years had turned the color of her hair. It used to be the color of corn silk; now it was the color of winter broom sage. She was once tall and handsome as a stalk of wild lady's finger. Now

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she had reached autumn and the bloom had shed. The eyes that were bluer than the sky in April had been dimmed by time. Seventy years Lommie had lived, worked, dreamed, laughed and loved.

Effie Pratt didn't need the lantern that night for the full moon was racing up the sky. The tender leaves had come to the elms. The water birches leafed beside the Tygart. The percoon was white with bloom on the river bank; the air was pregnant with beginning spring.

Effie Pratt walked beside the old rail-fence toward the Wilburn house. She whispered to herself: "If I ever wronged Lommie Wilburn in my life I don't know it. She always was strange with me. God alone knows what this is all about. Thought once I'd not come tonight but I'd never be happy afterwards to know she'd sent for me when the Master called her and I didn't go. She might have a confession to make. A body can never tell what it is one wants when the Master calls."

Effie Pratt entered the tall gate under the leafing yard elms. Her footsteps fell quietly. The March moon was pretty above. Ten thousand stars were in the sky. This was a night for life, not death. Effie stepped upon the porch. She knocked on the door. Xerxes came to the door and opened it. Effie walked in.

"It's the fever that's got Lommie," Xerxes said. "Come to the back room and see her."

Effie walked past the children. All eleven of Lommie's children were in the front room but one. Gracie was waiting on her mother. She carried water for her to drink, and filled her pipe with tobacco.

"Ah, Effie! You are the person I've been wanting to see," Lommie whispered, reaching her long skinny hand to shake Effie's hand. "I'm glad to see you. I remember the days when you used to live close to me. I want to talk with you while we take our last smoke together. You remember the Sundays when we used to rock out under the peach trees and smoke?" she asked Effie in a soft whisper.

"I remember it all," Effie said. "We used to walk over the garden together. I remember when we used to take bluing and mark the hen eggs and set them under the hens. Just a few springs back and we were much younger with our children at home then. Time has changed us since then."

Grace brought the pipes. She had them filled with tobacco and put a coal of fire on each pipe. She gave one to Effie Pratt and one to her mother.

"Ah, this is what I like," Lommie muttered. "I love a good smoke before the night comes."

Lommie drew the pipe with short draws. Her breath was short. She blew out tiny wisps of blue smoke into the room. The smoke circled in tiny swirls to the ceiling. Effie pulled stronger at the pipe stem. Big swirls of tobacco smoke came from her lips and filled the room. Effie sat in a rocking chair by Lommie's bed.

"I got to go this time, Effie," Lommie whispered. "It's a matter of hours." Lommie Wilburn blew swirls from her pipe between her dried lips. Her gray hair glistened silver in the golden flow of light from the oil lamp.

"I just want to tell you what I want, Effie," Lommie continued, whispering.

Effie blew a swirl of smoke from her pipe. She saw the color flicker and fade in Lommie's cheeks as she lay there. Now she remembered the times she saw her walk among crowds of women. She was straight as an arrow. Her eyes were blue as April skies. Her eyes held you when you looked at her. Her hair fell to her waist—hair almost the color of golden corn silks in August. The same mansion of living dust lay quietly now and smoked her pipe. Gracie left the room and joined the children in the front room.

"I'll tell you what it is," Lommie whispered. "Come over here closer. I wonder if you'll be obliging enough to do me this last favor. I would ask it of only one woman."

"If it is my power," said Effie, "I'll do it for you, Lommie."

"It is this," Lommie whispered softly in Effie's ear. "When I pass on to the Beyond to meet the Master—I want you to lay me out. I want you to wash me clean and put new clothes on me. I don't want a garment put on me that's old. I don't want any undertaker to touch me," she whispered loudly. "I don't want one to lay his hands on my body. I have always had you picked to do this for me. I've always thought you were the woman."

"I'll do my best to do it," Effie said. "I never thought about you wanting me, Lommie."

Lommie puffed her pipe. Small streams of smoke came from her pipe and went in tiny air-thin streams to the ceiling. One could hear the boys and girls in the front room talking. One could hear the crackling of the wood fire in the big fireplace. One could smell the first breath of spring in the night wind outside. Effie was smoking her pipe in little fast puffs.

"My son is an undertaker," Lommie said softly, "something we didn't used to have here. He is one of the first undertakers among these hills. I didn't want him to be. We used to bury one another's dead. Guess the people have changed in my seventy years," she whispered hoarsely. "I know my son can't bury me. My son, Ed, is the one that's studied how to bury us. He nor no other man must ever have his hands on my body. You must see to that."

The moon was racing over the sky. The hours were flying.

"I must be getting back to my children," said Effie. "I left them at home with Johnson."

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She took a piece of kindling and lit the lantern. She placed her shawl around her shoulders.

"Good-night, Lommie," Effie said.

"Good-night," said Lommie.

Effie walked through the front room—past Lommie's children—five boys and six girls. Effie said: "Good-night." They said: "Good-night, Mrs. Pratt." She walked out into the night wind with her lantern. She walked down the walk where Lommie had walked and talked to her eleven children.

This is very strange, Effie thought, as she walked along the path. I thought she was mad at me all the time; now, she picks me out of all the women here to lay her out and dress her clean for burial.

Effie walked to the house next day. It was high noon by the sun. Effie went to the house to perform Lommie's last request. Effie walked the path by the old rail-fence. Patches of March sunlight were on her shoulder. Trees upon the hill were interfering with the sunlight on Effie's shoulder—making it a crazy-quilt of light here and shade there. Effie saw the water-cresses greening the bottom. They were good tender greens for spring. Effie remembered Lommie and the watercresses in the spring as the blue smoke swirled from her pipe. She remembered the last smoke with Lommie last night. She turned to the left from the path by the old rail-fence. She walked down a road to the house.

"Thy will be done," said Xerxes to Effie. "It's a natural thing. I'll miss Lommie but there's no use to talk about it. She told me to stay here in the old house and keep the roof on it."

Xerxes walked up and down the big front room in front of the fire. His hands were clasped behind him. His dim eyes looked at the big-framed pictures on the wall.

"Just a minute, Xerxes," said Effie. "I just wanted to tell you Lommie's request to me last night. Don't know whether she told you or not," Effie said, gesturing with her hands. "But she told me that she wanted me to dress her today. She told me she wanted me to get her ready for burial and she didn't want one of her children to lay hands on her body. She made it plain to me that she was against undertakers."

"She never told me what she wanted done," Xerxes said. "You know she was like that. She always had her own plans. You follow her plans," Xerxes said, rubbing his big hand over his beardy face. "She told me she wanted a cedar coffin. I'm having one made out of one of the cedars that stood out there in the yard. She wants to be buried above the river on the hilltop. You know, back there at the Carmack Graveyard."

Effie got Lommie ready for burial. Only Effie's hands touched Lommie.

Night came again. The moon came up the sky above the rail-fence and the leafing apple trees. People came by twos, tens and twenties. They came to sit up with the corpse. It was a custom here. They laughed and talked in the front room. They sang a hymn. They spoke of life. They spoke of crops to be planted. They did not talk about death. They kept the lamp burning low in the back room with Lommie all night. The sticks of wood on the front-room fire crackled into love-vine colored flames. The wind sighed into the cedar trees outside. The wind rustled the first green leaves of the elms, maples and dogwoods. The Tygart flowed down its green channel like a writhing silver snake in the moonlight.

"I tell you," Effie said to Lucretia Jaggers, "you can't tell what they think of a person here until he dies. This is one of the biggest funerals I ever saw here. It will take two hours for them to see the corpse. Lommie was a woman who kept her distance."

"I never heard a word said against her in my life," said Gibbie Spence. "She raised one of the best families among these hills."

The people filed past. Horses whinnied at the yard palings. The sun was in the late March sky. The winds softly stirred the first thin buds of springs. The crows winged over by twos. They were building homes in the tall pines and planning for a new season.

Six men carried Lommie in the new cedar coffin up the hill to the Carmack Graveyard. The crowd followed slowly up the mountain. There was only a path. It was too narrow and steep to take a wagon.

The preacher, Judd Thomas, a one-armed man with a brown mustache, said: "Let's sing: 'When winter's darkling waves we ferry o'er.' We don't need books, Brothers and Sisters. Most of you know that old song."

Voices sang "When winter's darkling waves we ferry o'er." Brother Judd Thomas preached that life has just begun when the winter is ferried o'er. Lommie's children were there with their wives and husbands and their children. They shed tears freely as rain falls from summer skies.

The preacher crumbled dust inside the box as the leather check lines lowered it into the hill. One could see the eternally young Tygart River below bordered with avenues of spring green. Winter was over. The birds sang; butterflies burst from their dark-winter cocoons, resurrected from sleep into immortal spring.

The dirt was shoveled over Lommie after the funeral crowds left the hill. They started down the mountain, a long line of humanity following the course of a mountain path down among the rocks, the trees, flowers and vines. It was the only path they had to follow.

"If it were left to me," said Effie, "I know

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exactly what I would do when I put a tombstone there for Lommie. I'd put these words on her tombstone: 'She kept her distance.' These words are the right words for her. Good words for a woman."

The crowd of humanity filed down the path whence it came as the mansions of living dust, in their course of time return eternally to the earth that gave them. There they bloom again forever young, fresh and immortal.

What is Hispanidad?

By ALFONSO JUNCO

THE GENEROUS letters readers have sent me concerning my COMMONWEAL article of June 6 about the United States and Hispanidad are evidence that the field is a fertile one. They indicate as well the possibilities of our arriving at a closer understanding if we will but go a bit deeper into the subject. My doing this will, I hope, enliven the fraternal communication between us, bring us closer to a true understanding of much that separates us at present, and redound to the mutual benefit of our countries in the sphere of spiritual and intellectual cooperation.

What is this Hispanidad about which there is so much talk, often misleading talk? The concept of Hispanidad is twofold. It means, on the one hand, the Hispanic spirit; language, culture, heritage, religion, customs, history. It means, on the other hand, the mass of nations infused with that spirit. This mass of nations embraces Spain herself, as well as the peoples of America into which Spain poured, for three centuries, her soul, her body and her blood. Here, in our homelands, we call ourselves, with perfect accuracy, Hispano-Americans, a term we prefer to "Latin Americans," now so prevalent in the United States. And in order to encompass all the meaning of what is in our minds, the things of America as well as those of the peninsula, we use the one concise word—*Hispanidad.*

This does not imply—we hasten to emphasize—either exclusion or depreciation of all that is indigenous, Indian, in our *patrias.* The genuine, the typical, the singularly glorious attribute of Hispanidad lies precisely in the fact that it incorporated and fused in itself the aboriginal blood of the continent as well as the peculiarities and excellences of the various races. It is most important to emphasize, as vigorously as possible—and I hope to do that expressly some other time—*that authentic Hispanism is the best Indianism.*

Without prejudice or racial superiority, with an exemplary Christian feeling, Spain consummated the fusion of her people with the native tribes: and thus emerged the great *mestizaje,* the mixed-blood mass of America which, while undoubtedly presenting contributions and characteristics of its own, still recognizes Hispanidad as its "common denominator": the Catholic and European culture, of a most intimate and personal nature, which we received from Spain. Thus Spain furnished the amalgam, the core of unity, to what had been a heterogeneous mass. On these lands she stamped character, physiognomy, generic ways, things that strike us with compelling force today, through the length and breadth of her American lands, as signs of the Hispanic brotherhood.

All of this is what we try to express when, on October 12, we speak, more or less vaguely, of the "Day of the Race." Far more accurately could we call it the "Day of Hispanidad."

What common bond was there between our varied and warring Mexican tribes? The Tarascans had nothing in common with the Mayans or the Aztecs. The latter, as much as they were able, lorded it over the Tlascalans, the Zapotecans, the Mixtecans and other ethnical groups. They were not brothers but enemies. That is why, in order to fight their enemies, the oppressed peoples allied themselves with the conqueror, Hernando Cortés. The element that brought unity to our mixed and antagonistic native groups was the Spanish régime.

The same thing is true in language. With a deep reverence for and an intense interest in the study of the Babel-like multitude of languages and dialects which separated the aboriginal peoples, Spain communicated to them the wonder of her own beautiful tongue. With it they were able to escape from their dark particularism, their isolation; fraternize among themselves, enter into contact with the universal culture which came to them from beyond the seas.

The same was true in religion. A welter of primitive gods—often ferocious, often rivals—dominated the land. With the coming of Christianity, bloody sacrificials and cannibalism were abolished. The Indians were raised to a higher plane of kindly daily living, of human dignity, of common fraternity.

And the same was true in geography. The different tribes occupied regions that were relatively small, discontinuous, scattered. The territory of New Spain—and even our much diminished present territory—is not simply what the Indians inhabited. It is that and much more that was discovered, peopled and civilized through the amazing Hispanic effort. It is that whole great region cemented into political unity by the continuous and effective effort of the vice-regal régime.

That is why it is ridiculous foolishness to call Mexico, as is too often done, the "Aztec nation." Our ethnical makeup, our language, our religion, our culture, our territory are not those of the Aztecs; they go far beyond and in every way surpass what could be covered by that narrow term.

But Hispanidad is—for us as well as for the

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other sister nations of America—the "common denominator" that does not exclude but actually embodies in it all that is Indian; that integrates the divided, the "fractioned," into a generous total, a generous whole.

Spain never did have—and it is an exceptional and magnificent glory of hers—the haughty consciousness of race. She believed in neither the absurd theory wielded as a weapon by Germany today, nor in the application of the theory as it was always practiced by England.

Never has the Englishman mixed with the native in his possessions: and that is why his possessions are rightly called colonies, whereas those of Spain never were, at least in the same sense. One of the many improprieties absorbed by everyday language and perpetuated by lazy routine is that of calling the Hispanic period "colonial," the nations of Hispanic America "colonies." They were as much kingdoms, provinces of the great empire, as were Aragon, Cataluña or Navarre. The transfusion and community of blood and spirit created a new, palpitating, vital thing that cannot be adequately encompassed within the cold confines of the word "colony."

In New Spain—let us continue to use Mexico as an example—everybody felt, at one and the same time, pride in their nation and pride in their citizenship in the empire:

Levante América ufana
la coronada cabeza,
y el águila mexicana
el imperial vuelo tienda,

Raise, proud America,
Thy crowned head,
And let the Mexican eagle
The imperial flight begin

sang Sister Juana Inés, the great Mexican poetess of the seventeenth century; and the same outlook, the same spirit, welled up with inadvertent naturalness in the hearts of all of her contemporaries.

The Indians worshipped the monarch and when, in 1810, the independence movement emerged, it was necessary to start it with the cry of "Long live Ferdinand VII," the reigning king of the period. It was not the Indians but the creoles and even men from the Spanish peninsula who promoted and consummated emancipation from the homeland. That emancipation was, in reality, a civil war; and it was absolutely foreign to any motive of race or pigmentation.

Our independence struggle—a most complex movement in which many historical circumstances met, and in which were intermixed honorable ideas, false propaganda, just reasons, surreptitious dealings—brought about the disintegration of the great Hispanic empire. The movement against Spain was skilfully encouraged and used to advantage by her traditional enemies. "Divide and rule" was their motto. They accomplished their purpose.

Weakened, broken into fragments, we have become a simple field of acquisition, a mere zone of influence, under the hegemony of Anglo-Saxons. By a truly bitter paradox, our more or less perceptible *dependence* on them began when we believed that our *independence* had really been accomplished.

And one of the most effective means of promoting our spiritual subjection is to deform or deprecate or supplant the Hispanic, which constitutes the very soul of our culture, the nucleus of our being, the bulwark of our persistent will to live in our own tradition.

This is why, when English-speaking writers discuss such things, we tend to receive them with dislike or suspicion. Their words seem to clothe some darkly purposeful aims, though this may often be due to simple error, incomplete information, or difficulty in penetrating into profoundly different ways of being and living.

It is up to us Mexicans and to the other nations of the south, to embrace one another in brotherly solidarity; to place value on our Hispanidad, to make it work for us, as much for what it may offer us in the things of the spirit as for what it can bring in solidifying force for our community of peoples.

Because this continuity of being is a necessary condition to our way of life: culture, language, blood, all are a heritage of yesterday, but they are also a gift of today: if we deny them, we deny ourselves; we actually commit suicide. Hispanidad constitutes our family resemblance, our deepest similarities of character, our natural definition. And it offends nobody.

Let us hasten to repeat to our Catholic brethren of the north: *Hispanidad is not an enemy of the United States.* On the contrary: Hispanidad is charged with the essence of Catholicism; and it is precisely Catholicism which is the most effective link we can use between Anglo-America and Hispanic America. To heal the wounds of the past, to establish mutual comprehension, to build the solid friendship of the future—these are worthy tasks for all American Catholics.

English America and Hispanic America have different souls, languages and cultures. One of the big mistakes that has created resentment and grievances has been the spreading of Protestant propaganda in our countries, propaganda written by North Americans and supported by the United States. We—with all our faults, which are many—are Christians: we are not pagans nor worshippers of idols, as the Protestants suggest. And they do not succeed in making good Christians here; they simply succeed in making anti-Catholics by introducing into countries of religious unanimity those elements of dissention and disunion we have known in the past.

On the other hand, the Catholics of both Amer-

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icas can establish the securest bonds of union and friendship. We, the Hispano-Americans, can understand and love the United States more easily through her good Catholics. They, in turn, can understand and love us more easily, and in their country prepare the way for a better understanding of what we are and what we want. Community of religion facilitates community of understanding and sympathy. Let us begin this task, let us labor at it with generous enthusiasm; then, little by little, this understanding, this sympathy, will spread, consolidate and become general throughout both Americas.

Agreements between governments are cold, useless things especially if they are not sincerely supported by popular feeling. This is what matters fundamentally. And that popular feeling must influence the governments, in a democratic way, so that they will adjust their foreign policies to high purposes, so that they will be just, respectful of the sovereignty of others, be desirous of true and authentic friendship.

Before us lies a great task, we Catholics of both Americas. There is all about us a vast field for the exercise of our intellect, our talent, our apostolate.

Patching a Roof

By RONALD GRAHAM

THE OTHER MORNING I looked from the living room window and saw, through the maple trees in my neighbor's farmyard, the glint of silver.

At first it puzzled me. Then I looked again, harder, for we folk in the country must know everything the neighbors do. It is an ancient tradition. That is why, sometimes, we listen in on the party telephone line.

At the second look, I understood. I had no need to question slyly to find out what was doing there. I knew; from the record of ten years, I knew. And, in a way, it made me feel sad. But not because I envied my neighbor a new metal roof on his straw barn. He should have had it long since.

My thoughts went back to the days of 1933 when my neighbor had had to let his hired man go because he could no longer afford to pay him his monthly wage of forty dollars. My thoughts went back to the day I talked to him that desolate autumn as he sawed wood in the yard with his aged father. He was bitter with the world that day; he was bitter against all those forces which threatened to wrest from him the farm he labored upon from the darkness of 5 in the morning to the darkness of 7 in the evening, to win a bare living of salt pork, potatoes, milk gravy and apple pie; and faded overalls.

And I remembered how he looked at me, peeringly, saying: "*I wish I* had a job." And how he told me that, in the years before he joined the army in 1917, he had been a federal meat inspector. And how, when he thought maybe an old boar was being passed off by the slaughter house as prime pork, he would cut a piece of meat from the carcass and place it on a radiator in the plant. And he could tell, from the smell of the heated pork, whether it was from a fat, young barrow or from an ancient sire of swine, and so settle the decision as to whether the carcass would win his stamped approval or condemnation. . . .

But those days of despair seemed far away as I looked from the window on that square of shining metal nailed slantways on the roof of the straw barn.

The straw barn sets at right angles to, and is connected with, the main dairy barn, where the hay is piled in the mows above, and the black and white cattle are stanchioned below.

I remembered one July day, a few years ago (in 1937, I believe it was), when I was helping my neighbor get in his hay. We were caught in a sudden thunderstorm and, after putting the horses in their basement stalls, had sat, backs against a fragrant mow, and talked of things farmers talk about.

The rain beat down and dripped through the holes in the shingles; and my neighbor said: "I've got to fix that roof, soon's I get time."

He said it that way out of pride, as farmers will when they have no money to repair a building, even though they realize the man they speak the words to knows the real reason why the roof leaks or the bleached clapboards of the sidewalls cry for a coat of paint.

All those memories of the depression days went through my mind as I looked out of the window at the glint of silver. A lot has happened in the world since that roof started to leak. It has been a tough ten years. But things at last are better: my neighbor is getting a higher price for his milk; his hogs are worth twice what they used to bring; he has a hired man again.

. . . But, as I looked, I could not understand, I still cannot understand, why seventeen nations had to fall under the heel of Mars before my neighbor could get enough money ahead to buy the roofing that would keep his barn from leaking.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

PERHAPS no living fiction writer, at least among English writers, wields the power of the scientific imagination in anything like the degree exercised for so long a time by H. G. Wells. It was not only in England

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and the British Empire and in the United States that his influence has been so great since he emerged suddenly into permanent fame with the publication of "The Time Machine," more than forty years ago, for few English-speaking authors have been more widely translated and circulated than Wells in Europe and Asia. A despatch to the New York *Times* (September 29) from London, dealing with the closing meeting of the British Association of Science in that bomb-torn world capital, supplies a glimpse of Mr. Wells which he himself, in his prime as an imaginative writer, might have utilized and built up into one of his most thrilling and most symbolic pages. According to the correspondent, Mr. Wells, who in many novels and romances and in his two world-famous books, "The Outline of History" and "The Outline of Science" "had contributed as much as any other in making known to the common man what science meant" was now, as he presided over the conference of scientists, a strange spectacle of a man.

"His withering voice squeaked upward among the tiers of listeners and his age-weakened body, housing the prophetic mind that has witnessed the ravages of two great wars—was not up to the task of reading his own paper. He simply offered it in mimeographed form and invited those who wanted to see what he had to say to get it for themselves. With lapses and efforts, however, he presided over the session, introducing each speaker."

What his "prophetic mind" now offered to the world is only partly told in the dispatch, but those familiar with what he has been writing for so long will find the few words quoted sadly consistent with that strain of apocalyptic advice he has been dispensing in books and lectures all his life. Only, it is now no less than man's total extinction that he perceives as inevitable unless, of course, man adopts the Wellsian prescription of total change into a world society run by scientists of Mr. Wells's turn of mind. For, he warns us, man cannot remain as he is. "The question is whether man can adapt himself with sufficient rapidity to become either a progressive super-homo, or one of a series of degenerating, sub-human species, or whether he would fail to adapt himself and end altogether. Record of the past is, on the whole, against the idea of any survival whatever of the human strain."

As a very young writer, nearly half a century ago, this gloomy warning was really anticipated by Mr. Wells in the first of his "scientific" novels, "The Time Machine." In this tale he described how a highly observant modern scientist had invented a machine, by means of which he could travel in future time. He put the machine to use and beheld the gloomiest possible scenes imaginable of mankind's division into two great main branches, a sort of logical culmination of the class struggle between the "haves" and the "have-nots." The rich and privileged class, aided by all the resources of modern science, gradually had transformed the whole world into one social and economic unity full of abundance and beauty and ease—but at the cost of maintaining a subordinate mass of degenerated slaves to do all the work, especially the dirty and dangerous work. Then the time came when the upper class lost all real capacity for rule and the sub-human world rose up against it with the result that both classes exterminated each other and the world was left to the insect and animal species of life—until they, too, were exterminated by the inexorable processes of natural decay: the whole earth freezing as the sun cooled and died. Which is precisely the sort of thing which must happen if the purely materialistic thesis of science is the ultimate truth concerning man. Anyhow, Mr. Wells has lived long enough to witness a prophecy made in the imagination of his youth become in another but perhaps even worse manner a probability, so far as his own type of science can judge, as the world is ravaged by the beginnings of a world revolution of "have-not" nations against other nations accused by them of monopolizing world resources. It was high time for science to make that alliance with religion which has begun in our own country.

Communications

THE LINDBERGH SPEECH

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Permit me to congratulate THE COMMONWEAL on its unusually thoughtful and illuminating editorial on Colonel Lindbergh's speech in Des Moines, Iowa (September 26). I agree with it all the way.

Colonel Lindbergh himself is, to my knowledge, not anti-Semitic; not as anti-Semitic as some who seize the opportunity publicly to criticize him. Nevertheless the consequences of his speech were amazingly hurtful and the speech itself was an example, not only of over simplification but of unscientific analysis of the forces and men putting us into war.

For instance Colonel Lindbergh entirely overlooked the pressure, subconscious even more than conscious, toward armament economics and war, which arises from our failure to use our economic machinery in peace for the conquest of poverty. Any economic order, in modern times, must expand to live, and our order, having failed to expand for life, turns to the expansion which, in the end, means death; the expansion of armament economics and war. I have often compared it to the moth turning toward the flame, which devours it.

Also I think there was a very genuine pressure toward war on the part of a government seeking to expand its power. This drive for power rationalizes itself under a messianic complex.

But I didn't mean to write a letter philosophizing about the situation so much as to indorse your statement about "the powerful Jewish element of the Socialist Party consistently and strongly anti-war."

It is true that many socialists outside the Party are pro-war and some have left it on account of our stand, but I do not think the number of Jews who have left it for that reason is proportionately higher than Gentiles. Some of the most active members of the governing committee of the Keep America Out of War Congress are Jewish. Finally, the section most strongly for war, according to the Gallup poll, is the South, where the percentage of Jews and of foreign is smallest. The Colonel should have considered these things.

NORMAN THOMAS.

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THE WAR

Lancaster, Pa.

TO the Editors: THE COMMONWEAL on September 5 objected to the President's Lincoln quotation as an over-simplification, and on September 26, in commenting on Colonel Lindbergh's Iowa speech, says "most of the talk about the war is bad" because it is "simplified to the point of distortion."

Well, it is a fault of which the editors cannot be accused! For months THE COMMONWEAL has been discussing, in a sort of theoretical vacuum, all the complex and abstract phases of the issue to the exclusion of the one pertinent fact: the inexorable logic of dynamic events set in motion. On September 19, fact intruded. It was admitted that "there is no policy (to bring about the defeat of Hitler) short of war," and that any form of aid is belligerent to the degree that it is effective. There followed a swift retreat from reality. The writer stated that "asked whether to go to war or not to go to war" he "would say no, do not go." He found the issue to be still a subject for debate and decision at a moment when the navy was hunting Axis submarines and raiders to shoot at them!

The truth is that we began to participate in the war when the Lease-Lend Bill was passed by Congress with the unmistakable support of the majority of the American people. To the degree that Lease-Lend aid was made effective, to that degree it would necessarily be regarded as belligerent. From that moment the extent to which this country would participate must depend, in part, upon factors over which we can have no control. Nor is there any reality in saying that we are where we are because the President has acted in excess of his constitutional powers. All that has happened was implicit in the Lease-Lend Bill, duly and constitutionally passed by Congress; and the deeds and words of the President simply reflect accurately both the unity of purpose and the still-existing confusion in the minds of the people.

The average American who favored the passage of the act had hard horse-sense. He knew that billions were not being appropriated to lie at the bottom of the sea. If he thought he could take the course he did take and still retain full freedom to limit the extent of his participation, he was cherishing a dangerous delusion—one indulged in by Mr. Hoover in his latest speech. If the policy is not reversed, whether or not it was undertaken with a full realization of the possible costs, no one can now say how far into participation it is going to lead us. It has led to the Iceland base and the naval shooting; it may lead to Irish and English bases and an A.E.F. Only one thing is sure: the material will not be allowed to go to the bottom of the sea. Either we are going to see that it gets to the place of use by whatever means prove to be necessary, or we must abandon the whole policy. The isolationists have always seen clearly that Lease-Lend was the issue. They lost, and are now engaged in fighting a delaying action, in the hope that public opinion may yet be persuaded to turn against the policy which has brought us where we are. Whatever one may think of them, one must admit one knows what they mean.

It is more than can be said concerning THE COMMONWEAL. On September 12 you say "continuing the war" is "compromising with evil." Then is not the continuance of Lease-Lend compromising with evil? Is not Mr. Hoover's approval of the Iceland base and the defence, by shooting, if necessary, of the shipping lanes compromising with evil? These acts are "continuing the war." If participation in war is a sin, the first step in participation, like running into occasions for sin, must surely be repudiated. If the editors should come out flatly for a reversal of policy on the ground that war is, *per se* and always, evil; or on the ground that participation in *this* war, is for this or that reason evil, I could not agree with you, but I should cease to be baffled.

I made my own choice at the time of Munich when the Czechs, unlike the Poles and Yugoslavs—see your comment on September 12 in re "the evil of permitting the devastation of small countries like Poland and Yugoslavia"—when the Czechs were not "permitted" to fight for their freedom and their homes, but were "permitted" nonetheless to be devastated and enslaved. The issue appared to me then, and still appears, very simple. It is whether or not a strong, free people shall go to the defence of the freedom of their neighbors. The word "freedom" has been used with many connotations. I use it to mean the freedom with which the human race was endowed by its Creator, freedom of will, the duty, and therefore the right, of every human being to decide moral issues according to the dictates of conscience and to act upon the decisions with impunity. Mr. Churchill expresses the issue with the commendable brevity and simplicity of an immortal phrase—"that bad man."

Over-simple? Great decisions, by the very fact that they have been reached, are capable of being expressed with lucid simplicity. All the enslaved peoples of Europe know exactly what Mr. Churchill means, because experience has left no room for doubt. They know the man is bad and they know that he is a liar. They know it with an appalling simplicity. Very simple, too, is what they are mutely saying to us, and simple must their verdict be if we should pass by on the other side, engrossed in endless debate. It is indecisiveness which is befogged and complex, and requires long words and subtle hair-splittings.

MARGARET J. WINDOLPH.

LATIN BLOC

Boston, Mass.,

TO the Editors: Our own relations with South America at this time, and the Catholic aspect involved, spotlight an important question. Has Latin Catholicism some privileged standing in the Church? Should the Latin nations of South America and Europe unite to form a body of Catholic unity? Hitler's shadow over France and Italy and his threat to the Iberian peninsula may postpone such a project, but is it a goal to be sought in the days of peace?

One of our finest Catholic periodicals, the *Dublin Review*, under the distinguished editorship of Christopher Dawson, carries an illuminating article on the subject in its issue for July of this year. The author, J. J. Saunders, noting the frequent proposal of such a plan from Latin

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quarters, shows both its motive and its mistake. True, the Latin nations seem to be Catholic countries with Catholic civilization—in spite of many large-scale exceptions. But the Church's mission is world-wide, and such a "bloc" might well be fatal in alienating the non-Latin world.

It might be thought that the British Empire and the United States would be prominently mentioned in this respect. Yet the author takes two other nations for his special consideration, namely, Germany and Russia. His skilful dissection of their history in relation to the Church is wonderfully revealing. Historical "accidents" have weakened the Catholic elements in Germany and strengthened the forces of schism and atheism in Russia. With the hoped-for dissolution of both nazism and communism in the course of current events, the author finds hope that earlier errors and barriers may also be removed. It should therefore be with readiness to welcome and encourage such a liberation, such a true Christian reunion, that we must view the "non-Catholic" countries, and not banish them beyond the confines of a Latin inner circle.

We Americans may yet be in the war, and only such a hope of a truly better world can inspire us in the sad business. In the meantime, relations between England, Ireland and the United States may well be improved by an honest expression of our common Catholic ideals, even as diverse Christian bodies in England have rallied to the leadership of Cardinal Hinsley, and to the ideals of peace of Pius XII.

HASTINGS BLAKE.

PETER'S BARK

Long Beach, N. Y.

TO the Editor: If Father Cohalan is astonished at my statement, I must confess that I am even more astonished at his quibble. The whole context of our discussion is concerned with the working of the Christian leaven in the temporal order as such, not in the purely spiritual realm.

It was, therefore, "too much to suggest. . . that the existence of the Catholic Church is sufficient evidence" of the latter. If it weren't I could not conscientiously continue my priestly function. I say this in all charity and sincerity.

V. A. BROWN.

The Stage & Screen

The Joos Ballet

THE JOOS BALLET, formerly of the Theatre des Champs Elysées, Paris, and more recently of Darlington Hall, England, is by now in New York a known and welcome friend. When we go to these performances under the artistic direction of Kurt Joos and Frederic Cohen we know pretty well what we are going to find. There will be in the proceedings no Pavlowas, Mordkins or even Eugene Lorings; we will never be lifted from our seats by an exquisite apotheosis of grace or magnificent feat of masculine agility; we will neither be thrilled, enthralled or transported; but we will be interested. If one of the offerings, too, happens to be "The Green Table," the interest will be intensified, for Mr. Joos's drama to Mr. Cohen's music always was imaginative and admirably executed, and despite the fact that the green table of diplomacy at present has been absorbed into the personality of Adolph Hitler, the terror of the dance of death is today more potent than ever in its symbolism. The dancers, or rather the pantomimists, know this work perfectly and make it both as a whole and in its parts a presentation never to be forgotten. Of the other ballets so far given this season special words of praise should go to "The Seven Heroes" and "The Prodigal Son." In these, as in "The Green Table," the artists show their humor, and also when necessary their poignancy of emotion. But humor, even when, as in "The Green Table," it is macabre, is what makes the Joos dancers outstanding. Though of eleven different nationalities, their Flemish origin is always evident in the peasant bite of their impersonations, in the angularity of their movements and gestures. Those who are willing to forego beauty of line for satire will always find the appearances of the Joos Ballet a cause for rejoicing. It is such again this year. *(At Maxine Elliott's Theatre.)*

Why Should Actors Act?

MR. RICHARD LOCKRIDGE, usually one of the sanest and most perfectly balanced of all American drama critics, becomes somewhat surprisingly a perfectionist in a recent Saturday article in the New York *Sun*. He asks why it is that fine actors will insist on playing poor parts. He acknowledges that sometimes it is because they don't know they are poor, and he also concedes that actors must eat. Nonetheless he deplores them appearing in inferior plays, saying that it is bad for their future. Perhaps it is, but if they appeared only in first-class plays there would be precious little play-giving in New York, or anywhere else. It is after all the run-of-the-mill play which has always made possible a theatrical season, and some of these plays turn out to be successes with the public. I haven't Mr. Lockridge's article before me, but I think he singles out as an example of a good actor in a poor part Mr. Percy Kilbride as the Maniac in "Cuckoos on the Hearth." Now "Cuckoos on the Hearth" may not be a masterpiece, but it is nonetheless a pretty good bit of theatre. Moreover Mr. Kilbride does not appear in a poor part, but in a part which would cause any actor of eccentric rôles to throw up his hat for joy. Therefore Mr. Kilbride, far from injuring his future, strengthens it by appearing in Mr. Kennelly's play. Moreover as the play is turning into a success he also fortifies his present. And this for any actor, even those who haven't large appetites, is useful!

GRENVILLE VERNON.

War in Earnest; War in Fun

SENATORS NYE and Clark are going to have to work overtime not only to see the earlier crop of films that they suspect of having pro-war propaganda, but also to keep up with the new output. Even if the investigation

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does not lead to government censorship (Heaven forbid), the publicity that it is getting will make audiences propaganda-conscious and not quite so gullible. They will be aware, for instance, in the newest example, that Tyrone Power as a fun-loving, daring Rover boy, a fresh, gum-chewing Yank who goes over to help the British fliers is likely to make us feel a little more kindly toward the English and their thumbs up, stout-fellow conservative heroism. Although the film conveys some of the harrowing England-in-wartime tenseness, it is mainly concerned with a conventional boy-meets-girl story in which Flier Power chases Night Club Singer Betty Grable and gets her in spite of the more promising pursuit of John Sutton. Strangely enough some of the best and funniest lines fall to Reginald Gardiner who doesn't even succeed in meeting shapely, glamorous Betty. Of course Director Henry King justifies the title and gives us some real excitement when *"A Yank in the R.A.F."* flies over Berlin with his English pals. The R.A.F. cooperated in the filming; and there are extraordinary bombing scenes and beautiful photography of night flying. Then there's the thrilling escape of our heroes from Holland, and later the big, exciting climax in which the boys aid the evacuation of Dunkerque. Propaganda? Yes; but the film is more interested in selling us Power and Grable than in putting all our Yanks in the R.A.F.

I don't know how the investigating Senators feel about the American army and navy films that are cropping up in abundance. Surely all that glamor and pulchritude, if audiences are influenced by movies at all, should renew our young men's interest in their draft numbers. Of course the send-off that Fred Astaire gets when a whole chorus comes to the Grand Central Station to dance goodbye, and the whirl of a time that Fred has in the army, won't fool any selectees that the same is likely to happen to them. But it is so good to see Fred in his best dancing form again (that super gay style that made "The Gay Divorcée" and "Top Hat" so enchanting) that we overlook the thin, implausible story in *"You'll Never Get Rich."* The infectious Astaire personality wins you in every scene he's in. Aided by Cole Porter's music, especially such swingy numbers as "Boogie Barcarole" and "The Wedding Cake Walk," Freddie keeps you dancing in your seat. Bob Benchley knows a thing or two about making people feel good too; and as Frieda Inescort's philandering husband, Bob's naïve technique furnishes further amusement. As Fred's favorite dancing pupil, pretty Rita Hayworth proves a worthy successor to Ginger Rogers and is able to keep up with the master in his not too tricky steps. Then there's double-talk Cliff Nazzarro whose Jabberwocky keeps the cast perplexed and sends the army into utter confusion.

You'll have to decide for yourself about the propaganda in Ann Sheridan's statement that if she were a man she'd join the navy. It won a round of applause from the audience with whom I saw *"Navy Blues."* Perhaps the audience was shaking itself out of a lethargy, for the picture has long dull stretches that leave one cold. The two Jacks—Oakie and Haley—work overtime with gags and horseplay, the kind of slapstick that Abbott and Costello do better. Martha Raye opens her mouth, sings and

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pursues Jack Haley. While the much publicized Navy Blues Sextette stand around like the gorgeous models they are, Ann Sheridan throws her curves at hog-calling Herbert Anderson to persuade him to stay in the navy. Director Lloyd Bacon didn't know eactly what to do with all these people, so he strung them together and called the result "Navy Blues." Maybe the famous recruiting poster will now read: "Ann Sheridan wants YOU."

The first of the streamlined features is ready for your inspection and enjoyment; and it looks as if Hollywood's answer to the double feature menace might be a success. Hal Roach's comedy *"Tanks a Million"* is only 50 minutes long. When coupled with a full length feature it shouldn't keep you in a movie palace until the middle of the night. The double-feature hounds won't feel cheated and you can take it or leave it. But I advise you to see this one which is a little satire on army life and regulations. I'm sure the army won't be hurt by the film's spirit of fun and good-natured ridicule. Our information-clerk hero, a regular quiz-kid genius, is drafted and dumbfounds his officers because he has memorized the manual and is bursting with information, regulations and innovations for running things. William Tracy plays the rôle with refreshingly innocent cheek; James Gleason as the colonel and Joe Sawyer as the sergeant add to the satire and merriment. Fred Guiol has directed the comedy with appropriate zip; and the result is a streamliner that promises more good fun and the elimination of boring *B*'s. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Books of the Week

Seeing the War

Strictly Personal. Somerset Maugham. Doubleday. $2.50.

SOMERSET MAUGHAM, shrewd observer and caustic critic of personalities, has the detachment that arises from a pagan estheticism. He is prepared to ring down the curtain at any time, but in the meantime he watches the act closely. He has a studied irony, a perverse calm, which allows him to turn over under a leisurely microscope the latest fool trying to save the state by inter-departmental notices. The smooth surface of his urbanity is applied impartially to fools and wise men, and while his attitude overlooks Christ and reality, it permits him to enjoy a brandy or a cigar on deck without taking the latest fall of a state too heavily. Even if the British Empire fell, one would have to take a hot bath. At any rate, get in touch with one's publishers.

"Strictly Personal" explains how the war impinged upon Maugham, tidied away in a charming villa on the Riviera that once belonged to a "retired bishop in the Catholic Church." He follows the code of his caste in offering his services to the state, though he prefers to work as a literary man in France rather than in England. He observes facts well and his contacts offered him unusual opportunities for exact observation.

There was friction between French and British from the beginning. Maugham on the whole defends the British. But there are many facts relative to the belated military support from the British that he does not consider. He establishes certain facts pretty clearly—that the internal class war in France was instrumental in her defeat. Many tanks were not available at the front because they were kept near the factories to crush possible rebellion among the workers. The rich were all set to sell out to the nazis. Egoism, incompetence, intrigue prevailed in all branches of the government—and, inevitably, a marked absence of a sense of reality.

This reviewer is not prepared to say whether there is some degree of malice in Maugham's analysis of certain leaders. But common sense shows that the bureaucracy of those democratic states that are in reality governed by an inner ring of plutocrats places a premium upon mediocrity and servility. It was so in France; it was so in England before Churchill took over.

According to Maugham, Gamelin was a wire-puller who was not on speaking terms with his own Chief of Staff. Daladier was about the only person among a ministry that had recruited a number of intellectuals for spreading propaganda and morale who could be understood by the people. Unfortunately, his own equipment did not go beyond popular oratory. Weygand was a defeatist owing to his mystic belief that France had become degenerate and could only be saved by a great trial. Pétain appears to be old, stubborn, conceited and a fascist. Chamberlain was a mediocrity of great personal vanity surrounded by yes-men.

It all goes to show that the circumstances determining the fate of states depend upon the same ironies of human character that are to be found in any village. In a case of war of this kind, death and destruction underline the commonplace. Maugham makes an observation about World War I which impresses this reviewer:

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> ". . . there had been a small battle in which there had been about a thousand casualties, and just outside a hospital I came upon a heap of dead men; they were piled on top of one another like dead sheep, and I had no feeling that they had ever been men, but rather that they were *things*."

One wonders whether the viewing of men as *things* is not the fundamental evil that has been underlying the pharisaic capitalism of England, the civil decadence of France, the mysticism of the machine in Russia and the nationalistic communism of Germany. Chesterton pointed out that "liberty" did not have meaning for him (and presumably "freedom") unless we understood by these terms *human dignity*. And human dignity rests upon a few profound truths that in actual practice nearly everyone disregards and are certainly embarrassing in our contemporary *milieu*.

WILLIAM J. GRACE.

BIOGRAPHY

America's Last King. Manfred S. Guttmacher, M.D. Scribner. $3.50.

FOR A KING to have to live next door to the French Revolution, for an English king to see the stupidity of his statesmen and the inertness of his generals lose him the Yankee colonies, is enough to have made him at least think all the rest of the world is mad which, one feels forced to grant, is close to madness. And George III was foredoomed by ancestry not to be able to combat the "buffets of outrageous fortune," nor did his training as a spoiled child increase his hope of sanity. Dr. Guttmacher is an accomplished historian as well as an acute psychiatrist. His book, besides being a day-by-day study of what this world did to the king's mentality, contains psychiatric sketches for those happy days (for gentlemen) when a gentleman could be fearless. Here are pen-pictures of the two Pitts (with a study of the lapse from sanity of Chatham), the two Foxes, Wilkes, Junius, Lord North and the lesser lights, a gallery for the amateur historian to chuckle over and for the professional to ponder.

We had not known how near sanity "to madness lies." Throughout his life the king was convinced of his divine right and was the first and indeed the only one of the Hanoverians to be a devout churchman and a loyal husband and father, in contrast to his grandfather who took mistresses after the true eighteenth century fashion, in order to be regal, and in still greater contrast to his son who "was the world's first gentleman and made the appellation hideous." Moreover he was the first George to love England. But it was his misfortune to reign through the French Revolution and the War of our Independence. Yet his voluminous correspondence breathes humility as well as obstinacy: "For though I act wrong in most things, I have too much spirit to accept the Crown and be a Cypher," and in spots sparkles, "Ce métier de politique c'est un très vilain métier; c'est le métier d'un Faquin; ce n'est pas le métier d'un gentilhomme"; "Lord Malmesbury, you and I have lived on the active theater of this world these thirty years. If we have not become wise enough to consider every event which happens quietly and with acquiescence, we have lived negligently."

This man we learned to hate as source of our country's woes, it appears, was a mild and timid child and, as a man, able to learn. But the world plagued him, adding even blindness of the body to blindness of the mind. Compare the picture we have had of him with the suppressed portrait and weep at the injustice of history.

Without possessing competence to place Dr. Guttmacher either as historian or as psychiatrist, we vote him admirable in both rôles. He has, be it said, dwelt too minutely for our taste on the dreary dragging illnesses and the dreary squabbling doctors, but he has given us a lot of newly resurrected quotations from the wits, writing a sad tale with a happy pen. The appendix is charming, the index excellent, the typography commendable.

EDWARD L. KEYES.

FICTION

The Battlers. Kylie Tennant. Macmillan. $2.50.

THE PUBLISHER'S BLURB on the jacket flap of this book, which heralds it as "a sort of Australian 'Grapes of Wrath,'" is the reader's only introduction to its distant setting. But its atmosphere, its language and above all its dialogue are so very Australian that it will be almost unintelligible to Americans who have not visited Australia. If the publisher really wants it to be appreciated and read by Americans, the only solution seems to be a complete reediting job, a special introduction to the American edition, and above all a glossary.

The book is written for Australians who know their country. To an Australian reader—but not to an American, because it does not actually mention them—it will bring a vivid scent of eucalyptus leaves, the dust of the Western Plains, the blue-gray monotone of the bush, the cloudless days, the birdless silence of the back country. To anyone who does not know from memory these things are there, the picture may be dull and incomplete. Almost every modern Australian slang expression can be found in the dialogue, and it gives a good cross-section of current Australian low-class humor. The author seems to be trying very consciously to achieve this, however, and often becomes elaborate and self-conscious. The long descriptions lack the facility of experienced writing.

We should not discourage good Australian fiction, which is rare enough. Better Australian novels than this are being written today, but "The Battlers" is a vivid and grim picture of a new aspect of Australian bush life that has come with the last decade of hard times. It is no more typical of Australian life in general, of course, than "The Grapes of Wrath" was typical of American life in general; but as a sociological footnote it is, like "The Grapes of Wrath," interesting and important.

The story runs fairly well, but it is a series of incidents or pictures rather than a plot. These pictures show the wanderings, struggles, intrigues and abundant wrongdoings of a group of destitutes in the Australian bush. Here is a combination of the most unusual events happening to the most original characters in the strangest setting the American fiction audience is likely to be offered again for quite some time, if that is what you are looking for.

The incidents are quite authentic as to locale, customs, vernacular and the lore of the Australian bush: a rugged civilization unlike anything else in the world, of which not half enough has been written to provide a complete account for future historians. The author's anxiety to to authenticate the pictures sometimes leads to an almost didactic mass of detail: the lingering descriptions of the system under which the New South Wales state government cares for its vagrants become at times, like Dickens's excursions into slums and prisons, tedious obstacles to the course of the story.

With a lot more practice and some judicious editing of future works by the author's American publishers, Kylie

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Tennant should be worth watching in this day when readers are crying for factual, unusual novels.

LIONEL BRIDGE.

HISTORY

Natural History and the American Mind. William Martin Smallwood, in collaboration with Mabel Sarah Coon Smallwood. Columbia. $4.25.

THIS BOOK represents an interesting, important and entertaining idea. The authors are a zoologist and his wife, who had the curiosity to wonder how their field of study began in America. The investigation broadened into a history of the early naturalists of America and of the gradually widening influence of their work until it led, about 1850, to the modern evolutionary sciences.

The story begins with the explorers and early administrators sent to America, who wrote accounts of the land and the Indians, the strange plants and animals, descriptions filled with the delight of discovery as well as of an understandable desire to enlist interest at home. Such men as Oviedo, Captain John Smith and Hariot sometimes let their enthusiasm run away with them, but their vivid and entertaining reports of America to the Old World contained much observation and laid the foundation for a correct understanding of nature. The interval between the first rough-and-ready accounts and the age of systematic science was the period of the "naturalists." This word has fallen into disrepute among modern scientists. It is a pity; for, as the Smallwoods show, they were a delightful group of men, marked by a comprehensive curiosity and enthusiasm that carried them through all kinds of difficulties and adventures. They had no organized philosophy of nature and their influence upon the thinking of the average man was slight, compared with that of the scientists since Darwin. But the naturalists accumulated the knowledge and worked out the methods of classification and description upon which the evolutionary sciences are based. And at their best they were men like William Bartram, whose books had an influence upon the English lake poets and whose literary style, like that of Alexander Wilson, is a true contribution to American literature.

This book then begins with the adventures of untrained men in a new world, and traces the evolution of a new habit and method of thought in society. It includes a multitude of men, explorers, artists, doctors with a taste for natural history, book publishers, teachers, Lyceum lecturers, as well as naturalists. The authors discuss the books of the early explorers, the growth of natural history in the colleges and the much more significant development of academies and lyceums, the scientific subjects which Americans studied in European universities, museums and botanic gardens, the important contributions of artists and book publishers, the appearance of natural history in books for children, the contribution of American inventors to perfecting the microscope, the struggle for academic recognition of natural history and the disappearance of the naturalist before the specialized scientist.

These subjects have been treated separately, here and there; but it is not so much the individual topics, curious and interesting as they are, as their assembly in a single volume that is valuable. This is a form of history, dealing with the growth of ideas and the slow change of tastes within a civilization, that is very rare and of the greatest interest. It is done by a selection of typical figures. The authors warn that they made no attempt to include every important naturalist. Doubtless every reader will regret, as I did, the omission of some figure for whom they have a special personal affection. But the authors are probably right in saying that to have included all would not have added much to the value of the analysis. They write without any special grace of style but clearly and simply; the immense field is well considered and sympathetically treated. Anyone interested in the history of the American mind, as well as in natural history or education, will be thankful for their work. E. P. RICHARDSON.

The Morale of Democracy. Jerry Voorhis, Greystone. $1.00.
Cooperative Plenty. J. Elliot Ross. Herder. $2.00.
Cooperation. Edgar Schmiedeler, O.S.B. Catholic Literary Guild. $1.50.

IN THEIR current drive to awaken nationwide interest perhaps the greatest difficulty facing the cooperative leaders is how to dramatize the possibilities of such activity for the great majority of American families. Except for certain farmers and farm organizations, consumers cooperation in this country has been pretty largely a white collar proposition. People who welcomed, if they did not actually need, the savings have joined up primarily out of religious or idealistic motives. The great majority of the American workers, for whom the savings made possible by credit unions, cooperative stores, cooperative insurance, etc., would mean so much and whose families would benefit so immeasurably from the good quality assured by the Co-op label, have virtually been untouched by the co-ops. Yet the flow of books on cooperation continues. It is interesting to compare three of the latest.

Representative Jerry Voorhis's speeches on cooperation and economic democracy form the core of the first of these volumes, although together they are shorter than Wallace J. Campbell's accompanying able summation of the status of cooperation today. Mr. Voorhis believes that the United States must meet the basic problems of unemployment, over-dependence on government, monopoly, the farm problem, and he maintains, though he does not demonstrate exactly how, that cooperatives have the answer. In the process he brings out a number of pertinent facts and makes a number of intelligent comments. His impassioned remarks are well above the usual level of American political oratory. They should make people think.

Of quite a different stamp is Father Ross's "Cooperative Plenty," a calmer theoretical outline of a cooperative society, if we should succeed in achieving one. The author believes that cooperation constitutes a golden mean between individualism and the various forms of socialism rampant in the world today. He rightly wants to keep the good elements in modern capitalism. I think Father Ross takes the statements of some of our biggest insurance company executives as to the cooperative character of their enterprise too much at their face value, and I wish he had not excluded the problem of how to bring cooperative organization about in a country such as this. For many readers the volume might require a touch of perseverance, but "Cooperative Plenty" is worth careful study.

The liveliest volume of the three, the most popular in tone, is Father Schmiedeler's "Cooperation." After a brief introduction it starts right in with the experiences of the NCWC Credit Union in Washington, goes on to the story of the first cooperative store (Rochdale, England) and in general starts with concrete human experience. Historical and expository matters come later. Statistics are impressive, particularly in an activity which is growing as

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rapidly as consumers' cooperation, but the problem is to translate those achievements into human terms. In 218 pages of example, history, theory, the author covers a lot of ground; his primary concern is with this country but his narrative also takes in Scandinavia, Nova Scotia, the British Isles, Germany, etc. All three volumes—each in its own way—bear convincing witness to the social progress consumers cooperatives are effecting throughout the land.

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

WAR

This Burning Heat. Maisie Ward. Sheed and Ward. $1.25.

LATE last spring, when "This Burning Heat" was published, this reviewer read it and decided to hold the review until fall. Now all of the people who intended to read it four months ago and then overlooked it in the confusion of summer are reminded to read it.

Letters and other writings from England together with a connecting commentary and observations by Maisie Ward make up this book. The author begins by describing Horley, the English village where she lived, as it was immediately after the war was declared. She then tells of the trip she and her husband had in January, 1940, when they came to America to visit their publishing house here. On shipboard "The only real reminder that tragedy stood in our midst was a Polish priest who spoke to us in broken phrases of the crucifixion of his country. We had to converse in Latin as he has no English and I remember his saying that the part of Poland under Germany suffered worse than the part under Russia for with the Germans it was *'terror cum intelligentia'* and with the Russians *'terror sine intelligentia.'*"

The letters from people in England to friends in America are extremely interesting for they give personal accounts of the *blitz* which reveal the human reaction to continuous danger and repeated horror. The author describes many effects of the war. Heroism has become a habit. People think and talk more freely about serious things for danger has liberated personality. There is an absence of hatred for the enemy. There is a new appreciation of the brotherhood of man and a new recognition that material things cannot give an enduring security. The courage and strength of women has been demonstrated again. Children have been given more responsibilitys for once more there is work for them to do. Prayer and spiritual values have a new position of importance in the lives of all sorts of people.

The letter from Marigold Hunt is of special interest to those who knew her when she was in the New York office of Sheed and Ward. She turned to England in 1940. Last November she went up to London for a visit which she writes about in her letter. "I saw what looked like skywriting in Chinese appearing against the blue sky. It took me some time to realize that I was seeing a dog-fight . . . I discovered that if you want to know the time in London now, you must ask. The insides of all the clocks on the streets seem to have fallen out . . . In the shoe-shop I discovered that all the high-heeled shoes were cheap and the low-heeled ones much more plentiful but expensive. The shop-girl explained that everyone was having to walk much more than they used to . . ."

The description of the work being done in England by the Ladies of the Grail is one of the most significant parts of the book.

RUTH BYRNS.

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The Inner Forum

MONSIGNOR MATTHEW SMITH, editor of the Denver *Register* chain, after a visit to the Hawaiian Islands, reports in a current issue that successors to the heroic Father Damien are hard at work at the leper colony of Molokai today. The present pastor of the leper settlement is Father Peter d'Orgeval, SS.CC. (Fathers of the Sacred Hearts). The colony has decreased from the 1,000 inhabitants it had in Father Damien's day to some 400 at present. They live in little houses scattered rather widely throughout the settlement. About half the lepers are Catholics.

Assisting Father d'Orgeval are 10 Franciscan Sisters of the Third Order, whose motherhouse is in Syracuse, N. Y., and who conduct the Bishop Home, where free hospitalization and clinical service are dispensed. The men are cared for at the Baldwin Home by four Brothers of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Both Homes are government institutions. Father d'Orgeval himself was decorated six times for bravery in the last world war. He was serving as a pastor of an important Paris parish when in middle age he obtained permission to join the Picpus Fathers of the Sacred Hearts to work among the lepers. He has been there for 19 years and now has two healed gashes on his forehead due to his contraction of the disease several years ago.

The island of Molokai is within 50 miles of Honolulu and the Pearl Harbor naval base. Only 10 square miles of it is devoted to the leper settlement, a peninsula cut off from the rest of the island by a high mountain. Most of the lepers are from the dark-skinned races. On the average they live for eight years after admission to the colony. Normally it is something besides leprosy that is the cause of their demise. Happily the physical pain from the disease which at one time was so prevalent in Europe that 19,000 establishments were required to care for the victims, is not great, since the nervous system is affected.

In the churchyard near the grave of Father Damien lie the remains of Brother Dutton, the American Civil War veteran, who labored among the Molokai lepers for 44 years. Nearby is the tomb of Mother Marianne, who led a small community of Franciscan nuns to Molokai in 1888. In more than half a century none of the Sisters has contracted the disease. The heoric Mother Marianne prophesied that none of the Sisters who spent their lives there ministering to these outcasts would ever contract leprosy.

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